On Reconciliation

In reference to the political manifesto that I published roughly around this time last year, entitled *What Was, What Is, and What Will Be: A Vision for Northern Kentucky and the United States of America*, which more or less described my situation, outlined my allegations of systemic corruption in Northern Kentucky without spoiling evidence or naming specifics, and laid out my moral, legal, and strategic framing — as well as the formulation of the Northern Kentucky Truth & Accountability Project and the beginnings of what later became Charter 26 — there are a few things I would like to address.

It should be said upfront that the document was created with a great deal of research prior to its compilation. Indeed, I have been a public writer and political analyst for many years. I am also philosophically trained and have studied religion since childhood as a Roman Catholic educated within the Catholic school system. So I cannot fully state that this was some spontaneous creation. However, it *was* written very quickly and with minimal editing (there are many grammatical and other mistakes in it, to be sure), and it was published while I was under intense stress. As a result, some of the rhetoric was less than precise for a skeptical public audience, and some of the concepts were not articulated as completely as I would have wished — though, at the time, I believed much of it to be implicit.

To be sure, the document was not even really written for a mass public audience, as I never seriously anticipated that a general audience would read a book containing citations spanning classical, modern, and postmodern philosophy; political, legal, and military theory; and religion, poetry, and fiction. It was, more than anything else, a position paper intended to stake a narrative framing before adversaries could seize the narrative themselves.

I believe much of the public reaction centered around the idea that I was mentally unstable, which was actually highly beneficial for both myself and NKTAP. Even though my framing did not “land” at that particular moment, one cannot say that detractors seriously engaged the factual record itself. Adversaries miscalculated by believing the strategy was mass public persuasion when it was not. As a result, I remain confident that I will ultimately be vindicated because objective, material, quantitative facts do not rely upon my psychology.

In any case, this leads me to the central point that I would like to briefly outline in this essay: that of corruption. As I see it — and I believe this is well-attested within the literature — corruption is a highly stochastic process, and one useful analogy is disease.

Consider the rabies virus. Rabies hijacks the host nervous system in ways that alter behavior to maximize the virus’s own propagation. Hydrophobia, aggression, disorientation, and hyper-reactivity all increase transmission probability. To the observer, the process can appear almost intentional — as though the virus possesses agency or malice. Yet the virus is not conscious. It is the product of blind evolutionary selection operating across immense spans of time. Through countless iterations, traits that enhanced replication survived.

Corruption functions similarly. Institutions gradually evolve behavioral incentives that reward concealment, self-preservation, conformity, and the suppression of destabilizing truths. Individuals operating within those systems often participate unconsciously. Most are not sitting in smoke-filled rooms orchestrating grand conspiracies. Rather, they adapt behavior to survive within institutional conditions already shaped by prior corruption. It is about structured incentive alignment and path dependence.

That is why much of my work has focused on what I would call the regime's unconscious, because I do not believe — and the evidence did not initially suggest — that every individual within these systems was consciously participating in some grand corruption scheme. It is much closer to the way disease spreads socially through systems and institutions.

In fact, Plato makes a similar comparison in *The Republic*, where he describes oligarchic society as internally diseased and structurally unstable.[1]Alexis de Tocqueville similarly described the decline of France's ancien régime as a kind of disease spreading through the monarchy's institutions, noting how state documents had "become obscure, ill-formed, incomplete and muddled as they move into more recent times, despite the general progress of knowledge."[2] Even the Catholic Church acknowledged this principle explicitly under Pope John Paul II in the discussion of "structures of sin."[3] In Catholic theology, sin is understood not merely as individual wrongdoing, but as a form of disorder capable of embedding itself within institutions and social systems.[4]

Part of my investigative strategy, keeping all of this in mind, was to reveal what had become buried and unconscious and bring it into consciousness — and then observe the resulting behavior of the system and of particular individuals within it. That is: uncover misconduct, present it directly to the party in question, and then observe the reaction.

If the response is escalation, evasion, procedural abuse, intimidation, threats, or attempts at social destruction, then that constitutes, in my view, consciousness of guilt. Innocent people do not generally escalate into intimidation or procedural warfare when presented with evidence of misconduct. This approach is actually quite in line with known dissident strategies, such as that employed by Martin Luther King Jr., who described the civil rights movement as acting in the role of "social psychiatrists," exposing the hidden contradictions and pathologies of Southern

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[1] Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Allan Bloom, 2nd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 552e–555b.
[2] Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Ancien Régime and the Revolution*, trans. Gerald Bevan (London: Penguin Classics, 2008), pp. 30-31.
[3] Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (On Social Concern), December 30, 1987, sec. 36, in *The Papal Encyclicals, 1958–1981*, ed. Claudia Carlen (Wilmington, NC: McGrath Publishing, 1981).
[4] See Augustine, *City of God*, bk. XIX, on social order and disordered loves (*ordo amoris*); see also Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, q. 71, art. 6, on sin as disorder relative to right reason and proper ends.

and Midwestern states.[5] My goal was to expose the regime's weaknesses. In this process, we have been highly successful.

However, I would also like to acknowledge that in the closing sections of my manifesto — particularly in certain calls to action — I was highly maximalist in rhetoric. Strategically, this served a purpose: to maintain leverage, induce uncertainty within implicated parties, and prevent premature narrative containment. Again, I believe this strategy was undeniably successful.

But personally — and in keeping with the Western moral tradition itself — I must confess, as I alluded to in the section discussing a truth and reconciliation framework, that reconciliation has always been the unanimous goal. As I stated then, neither myself nor NKTAP are pursuing revenge. Rather, we want our community to be safe, healthy, functional, and conducive to human flourishing. Northern Kentucky has not been this for generations, if it has ever truly been this. But it is time for that to change.

In understanding corruption as a kind of disease — as institutionalized sin (from the Greek ἁμαρτία, literally "to miss the mark") — the objective is ultimately to realign institutions with truth and orient them toward their proper ends: the common good, justice, competence, human dignity, and social trust. That is why reconciliation is the goal, though reconciliation conditioned upon truth and accountability.

This was already present in the manifesto's discussion of a truth and reconciliation framework, though I do not think I articulated it fully enough at the time. The purpose of accountability is *not* personal vendetta; it is restoration of moral order. A healthy society cannot survive indefinitely while suppressing truth, rewarding corruption, and terrorizing those who challenge institutional disorder. Yet neither can a society survive through perpetual vengeance. Endless cycles of humiliation and retaliation merely reproduce the same pathology under new management.

Reconciliation, therefore, requires several conditions. First, truth. A society incapable of honestly confronting reality cannot heal itself. Second, accountability. Actions must have consequences, or institutions lose legitimacy entirely. Resulting from these comes *justice*. Where harm has occurred, efforts must be made — materially and morally — to repair what can still be repaired. After these conditions are satisfied, restoration. The ultimate objective must be restoration of civic trust and shared social life rather than permanent fragmentation into irreconcilable camps.

This is consistent not only with the Christian moral tradition but with virtually every durable tradition of political reconciliation in history. Even after catastrophic social conflicts, stable societies are rebuilt through truthful confrontation followed by reintegration under renewed moral norms.

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[5] Martin Luther King Jr., *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, ed. Clayborne Carson (New York: Intellectual Properties Management in association with Warner Books, 1998), 306.

For this reason, when I have spoken nationally about "de-Nazification" in America, or said that America's culture "must also be revolutionized," I have never meant mass violence, camps, or collective punishment.[6] I reject those approaches absolutely, not only morally but strategically. Certainly, I believe a significant number of individuals who knowingly committed serious crimes should face prosecution. A functioning legal order requires this. But the reality is that most participants within corrupt systems are not sadistic masterminds. They are morally compromised human beings adapting themselves to diseased institutional conditions.

The goal, therefore, is not the indiscriminate destruction of persons, but the transformation of incentives, structures, and culture so that institutions may once again orient themselves toward truth, justice, competence, and human flourishing. That is why we continue the difficult and necessary process of bringing what has been buried into the light so that society may again become capable of moral life.

The vitality of a nation ultimately resides within the common people themselves — even those whom society dismisses as backward, uneducated, or part of the ignorant masses. For all their flaws, such people often retain social instinct, vitality, rootedness, and the raw human material from which nations are renewed.

Much as Alexander Hamilton repeatedly argued that the United States required an "energetic" constitutional order capable of giving coherence and direction to a fragmented republic, our own task is to help restore moral and civic energy to a society that has drifted into exhaustion, nihilism, and institutional decay.[7]

And for that reason, we should still love our adversaries, because many of those caught within corrupt systems are ultimately confused and disordered brethren, alienated from truth alongside the rest of society. Reconciliation becomes impossible the moment we cease to recognize the humanity even of those who opposed us.

Blankenship (May, 15, 2026)

[6] Bradley Blankenship, "America Needs a 'Kind of Denazification,'" CGTN, June 6, 2020.
[7] Alexander Hamilton, "Federalist No. 70," in *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Clinton Rossiter (New York: Signet Classics, 2003), 423–31.